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RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0179
RUEHSW/AMEMBASSY BERN 1111
RUEHSL/AMEMBASSY BRATISLAVA 0057
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 5495
RUEHBM/AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST 0553
RUEHUP/AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST 0051
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0377
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN 4061
RUEHDL/AMEMBASSY DUBLIN 0063
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RUEHLE/AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG 0407
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RUEHNC/AMEMBASSY NICOSIA 0257
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RUEHPG/AMEMBASSY PRAGUE 0974
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RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0171
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RUEHSF/AMEMBASSY SOFIA 0402
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 8611
RUEHTL/AMEMBASSY TALLINN 4156
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RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0349
RUEHVT/AMEMBASSY VALLETTA 0217
RUEHVI/AMEMBASSY VIENNA 4662
RUEHVL/AMEMBASSY VILNIUS 3161
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RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 0081
RUEHVB/AMEMBASSY ZAGREB 0075
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0059
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TAGS: [NATO](#) [PINS](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [AF](#) [PK](#) [FI](#)
SUBJECT: FINNISH RESPONSE -- FULL COURT PRESS FOR
AFGHANISTAN AT JANUARY 26 INFORMAL NATO FOREIGN MINISTERIAL

REF: SECSTATE 7434

Classified By: POLCHIEF GREGORY THOME FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (SBU) PolChief discussed NATO/ISAF's new "Comprehensive Approach" to bolstering the mission in Afghanistan and the Jan. 26 and Feb. 8 NATO ministerials (reftels) with Finnish Roving Ambassador to Afghanistan Antti Koistinen and MFA Director for Security Policy Kimmo Lahdevirta on Jan. 25.

Increased Finnish Assistance

¶2. (SBU) Koistinen welcomed the rollout of the "Comprehensive Strategy," saying that the GOF shares the

concerns of NATO and the US and that the Strategy represents a crucial initiative to undermine any potential spring/summer Taliban initiative. It is very important to take the situation seriously now, he added, because the security situation could be "very hot" come spring. The GOF is particularly focused on the narcotics trade and the funding streams this is creating for Taliban fighters. In response, Finland is seeking to identify good long-term strategies and "also contributing money now," Koistinen added.

¶3. (SBU) Regarding specific contributions, Lahdevirta explained that Finland intends to maintain its 100-plus troop contribution to PRTs in Meymenah and Mazir-al-Sharif, as well as its Euro 10 million annual reconstruction package through at least 2010. In addition, Finland will:

- Increase its bilateral contribution to the Law and Order Trust Fund ten fold, from Euros 100,000 to 1 million;

- make additional contributions (Euro amount TBD) to munitions disposal programs; and

- provide an additional 10 trainers to a proposed EU police training mission, once the EU approves that initiative.

¶4. (C) Lahdevirta also indicated that Finland would re-examine the possibility of contributing non-lethal equipment to either the Afghan National Army or the Afghan National Police. The GOF rejected a US request last year to provide lethal equipment, based domestic political considerations and on a clause in its export control legislation that prevents exporting lethal equipment to "war torn" areas. However, Lahdevirta said that the MOD was now drawing up a plan for consideration by the Cabinet (possibly as soon as February) to contribute non-lethal equipment including generators and communication gear.

US Presence

¶5. (C) Finally, Koistinen and Lahdevirta warmly welcomed our reassurances that the US does not intend to cut troops in Afghanistan. "Rumors have indeed been circulating" in Europe regarding US intentions, Lahdevirta said, adding that a clear statement from the US at the Summits reaffirming its commitment in Afghanistan -- in addition to SecDef Gates' recent comments -- would do much to dispel those rumors once and for all.

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